ISCCP B1U preliminary data

The following is a description of the ISCCP B1U data as currently available from NCDC. The data, documentation and routines are available at the NCDC ftp location: ftp.ncdc.noaa.gov in the /pub/data/isccpb1 directory.

Purpose

To release a preliminary version of the ISCCP B1-Uniform (B1U) data for inspection by the user community.

Beta-test user community

The current user community consists of *1) anyone potentially interested in using the B1 data set* **and** *2) having time to "beta test"* it by downloading (and reading, navigating, etc.) the data. The **key** is for users to actually test out the data and provide feedback. Without it, the dataset will only be as good as I can conceive (which would be quite limited in scope). If you are aware of potential beta-testers, then please send me their contact information and I will send them an invitation to use the preliminary data. When the final version of the data is available, the data set will be available to the general public.

FTP files and directories

These are the files available in the ftp directory:
- **ISCCP-B1U-Readme.pdf** – This document.
- **B1_Unified_Format_Description.pdf** – A full (byte-by-byte) description of the reformatted B1 data.
- **B1U-routines.tar.gz** - A gzip'ed tar file containing IDL and Fortran 90 routines used to read, image and navigate the B1U data.
- **data/2001/** - All B1U data is located here … **currently, only January-June 2001 data is available due to space, other years may be made available upon request.**

Data I/O

The data has been created on Linux machines with Intel chipsets, so data files are little endian and should be easily read from any other Linux or Windows computer. Byte swapping may need to be performed for IBM, Sun and other big endian systems.

Period of Record

For the time being, data from the January-June 2001 will be available through ftp. More data can be made available on a per request basis. However, remember that this data format is a preliminary release. When input from all users is complete, the format will likely be modified, at which point the entire record of B1U data will become available (20+ years@ 3-hour resolution, all satellites, >1.2TBs)

Instructions

1. FTP the data and IDL routines *(Fortran 90 files coming soon)*

Using your favorite FTP program, grab the data and routines, copying them to your local system. If you plan on using the IDL routines, you will want to unpack them and put the directories in your IDL path.

2. (Optional) create I/O and navigation routines

If you do not plan on using IDL or Fortran to read and navigate the data (for example, you prefer C, Matlab, etc), you will need to write a b1uread routine to read the data (this can be accomplished using the data documentation and the b1uread.pro as a guide). Also, you will need to encode navigation algorithms. Again, you can use the provided IDL routines as a guide.

3. Provide feedback after use

As stated above, the primary purpose of this preliminary release is for user's to provide feedback, especially constructive comments (such as, to make the data format more useful for the community, report bugs/errors, etc.). The data will be available for use for roughly 3 months (through March 2005), at which time I will take all suggestions and modify the format and routines as needed to improve the data set.
Please send all comments to me via email. Any bugs in routines will be fixed as soon as possible.